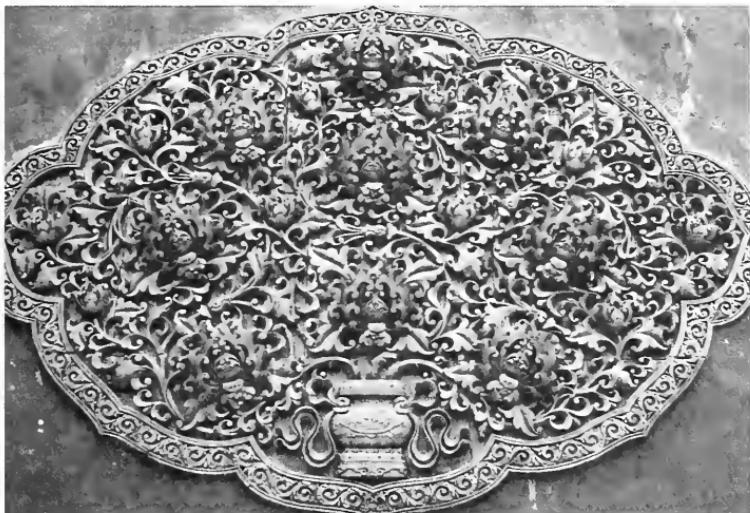


# The Flyleaf

Friends of Fondren Library Vol. 39, No. 2

Winter 1988



RICE UNIVERSITY  
FONDREN LIBRARY

Founded under the charter of the university dated May 18, 1891, the library was established in 1913. Its present facility was dedicated November 4, 1949, and rededicated in 1969 after a substantial addition, both made possible by gifts of Ella F. Fondren, her children, and the Fondren Foundation and Trust as a tribute to Walter William Fondren. The library recorded its half-millionth volume in 1965; its one millionth volume was celebrated April 22, 1979.

THE FRIENDS OF  
FONDREN LIBRARY

The Friends of Fondren Library was founded in 1950 as an association of library supporters interested in increasing and making better known the resources of Fondren Library at Rice University. The Friends, through members' contributions and sponsorship of a memorial and honor gift program, secure gifts and bequests and provide funds for the purchase of rare books, manuscripts, and other materials that could not otherwise be acquired by the library.

THE FLYLEAF

Founded October 1950 and published quarterly by the Friends of Fondren Library, Rice University, P.O. Box 1892, Houston, Texas 77251, as a record of Fondren Library's and Friends' activities, and of the generosity of the library's supporters.

Managing Editor, Betty Charles; Editor, Cory Masiak; Editorial Committee, Samuel Carrington, Margaret Clegg, Ferne Hyman, Nancy Rupp; Computer Consultant, Tim Freeland.

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Cover: Relief ornamentation on interior wall of the Forbidden City. Photograph by Bill Robnett.

## A LETTER TO THE FRIENDS

Dear Friends,

Fondren Library is still basking with pride in the afterglow of the library renovation dedication at homecoming. The new rotunda, remodeled reading rooms, and improved organization all create an elegant yet informal ambience and a more pleasant environment for study and research. The Friends of Fondren members can derive satisfaction from their contributions to this recent renovation of the library facilities.

Although an attractive, functional decor is impressive, the heartbeat of the library is still in its collections of books, journals, manuscripts, microfiche, patents, theses, audio-visual materials, and historical documents provided by individual donors, businesses, or governmental agencies. It is in this area where the Friends, through an annual addition to the Fondren Library Endowment Fund, contribute to the enhancement of the library and make the greatest impact in the quality of the collection.

If Rice is to continue to stand as one of the top American universities, it is crucial that Fondren Library be a well-stocked storehouse of up-to-date materials necessary in the transfer of knowledge. You as a member of the Friends can make a real difference in determining the level of the collection. As we prepare to celebrate the fortieth anniversary of the establishment of Fondren Library, we need your help with our spring benefit, Fondren Saturday Night, scheduled for March 18, 1989. From the proceeds of this annual party, we have added a greater amount each year to the Endowment Fund, which now totals over \$350,000. In celebration of Fondren's fortieth year, we hope to meet a goal of \$40,000 from the upcoming ninth annual benefit.

We invite you to help with this special project and urge you to give serious thought to your role in this united effort of the Friends. There are opportunities in underwriting, donating and securing auction items, and in giving of your personal time and effort. We hope that each of you will take an active part in making this benefit a success, which will help our fine library staff complement the attractive state-of-the-art facilities with the storehouse of knowledge needed in daily operation. Call me at 621-1266 or our office (527-4022) if you wish to volunteer, donate items, or underwrite some of the expenses. Your assistance will be appreciated and will be of far-

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reaching benefit. The Friends can have an enjoyable time working together to support Fondren Library in its efforts to become an outstanding library for the Rice community and for the public.

Sincerely yours,  
Mary Lou Margrave  
Vice President, Special Event

## A LIBRARIAN'S VISIT TO CHINA

by Bill Robnett

It was not without some misgivings that I submitted my application to join the Research Libraries Delegation, a group of librarians invited to participate in a professional exchange by the People-to-People program based in Spokane, Washington. China, the delegation's destination, was very near the top of my list of places to visit, but I am the type of traveler who seldom joins group tours. Even less frequently do I mix business with pleasure, hardly ever sightseeing when at American Library Association meetings, for example. However, the lure of the People's Republic of China was strong enough to cause a change of traveling style.

In retrospect, the group of North American and Puerto Rican librarians and information specialists was a big plus. The camaraderie was extraordinary, and I strongly suspect our Chinese hosts in Beijing, Nanjing, Shanghai, and Kunming sensed that as well. There were twenty-five in the delegation, including spouses, and we were able to enjoy each other as people, soon as friends, in addition to sharing professional perspectives on information centers and libraries in China and in our respective institutions.

People-to-People summoned the delegation to Seattle on August 8 for a send-off banquet and briefing. Many in the delegation had not traveled extensively, so I was as intrigued by the opportunity to observe the effect of our China visit on the delegation as I was by the chance to see China and to meet its people. The fresh, open perspective of the inexperienced international traveler can be as educational as the actual visit. (I'll explain here that I had both worked and traveled extensively in Southeast Asia and India in the 1970s, although I had not been to China. Indeed, at the end of the delegation's visit I was to return again to Malaysia to see old friends and acquaintances, almost fifteen years to the day since I first set foot in Asia.)

Tokyo, or rather Narita, the town nearest Tokyo's international airport, was the first stop on the journey. We were to pick up C.A.A.C., China's national carrier, in Japan for the flight to Beijing, and People-to-People had thoughtfully scheduled a night's rest on the ground near Narita. The next day we were able to visit a

temple in Narita itself—Shinshoji, which houses the image of the Buddhist divinity Fudō Myōō. Here began the rain that was to be with us until the end of the trip. It was the rain that kept the August heat at bay, and once one learned to take notes or snap a picture while holding an umbrella, the drizzle was not even noticed.

The C.A.A.C. 747 that was to take us to Beijing held a large American contingent, since it had originated in New York with stops in Los Angeles and Honolulu. I was all the more grateful for our brief Narita visit when I saw the exhausted passengers from the East Coast, who were unsure of the time or the day.



*Research Libraries Delegation at the National Library of China.*

### August 11-16, Beijing

The delegation was scheduled to tour what was surely the biggest, if not necessarily the best, on its first day in China: the library of Beijing University (BU) and the National Library of China. BU's library holds 4 million volumes, 2.5 million of which are in Chinese, and it acquires 100,000 volumes each year, some of which are obtained through exchanges with libraries around the world. As a member of the Research Libraries Group (RLG), a consortium of major academic libraries that includes Stanford and Columbia, the BU library provides cataloging records to RLG's database for its collection of ancient and rare texts. One million items are categorized as ancient or rare in the BU collection. A historical footnote: Chairman Mao was once employed at the Beijing University library.

Automation is being developed locally by the BU library staff for acquisitions, cataloging, circulation, and serials operations. It became apparent in our visits to institutes throughout the trip that such "in-house" development is the rule rather than the exception. If there is a national

Bill Robnett is Director of Reader Services at Fondren Library. All photographs are by the author.

plan to develop library systems software, it did not surface in the discussions.

The physical arrangement of materials in BU's library is typical of other libraries in China as well. Collections, including current periodicals, are grouped by subject and occasionally by provenance. This means that a library patron involved in interdisciplinary or area studies is required to use more than one reading room—for example, the social science reading room, foreign language reading room, natural science reading room, undergraduate reference room, etc. Patrons familiar with the Dewey decimal system or Library of Congress classification, both formerly used in many of China's academic libraries, including BU, must now learn the Chinese classification system, one element of library operations that does seem to be more standardized throughout the country.

The National Library moved to its present location, in a western suburb of Beijing, in 1987, and the enormous structure is impressive. A 14-million-item collection, to which 700,000 volumes are added each year, is housed within its walls. It holds the most complete collection of Chinese publications in the republic in addition to 300,000 Chinese cultural relics. The building can accommodate 3,000 patrons at one time and serves 5,000 people each day. The director, Ren Ji Yu, anticipates that the 140,000 square meters of floor space will be filled to capacity by the year 2000, leaving one to wonder about office space for its 2,000 employees. Some challenges to library management are definitely international; space constraints loom large in libraries of any size, even those on the scale of China's National Library.



Parking lot of the National Library.



Reading room at the National Library.

China has established an equivalent of the U.S. National Technical Information Service called ISTIC, the Institute for Scientific and Technical Information of China. Its chief purpose is to collect all technical and scientific information in China and to make this information available to researchers. Our tour guide, Wang Xiaochu, deputy chief of the Division of International Relations and Cooperation and a graduate of Simmons Graduate School of Library Science in Boston, explained that ISTIC also has a graduate education program in information technology in addition to its information gathering and research services functions.

UNESCO and the European Space Agency have played a large role in assisting ISTIC in developing its International Online Retrieval Service. This service provides access to computerized databases using DIALOG, EAS/IRC, ORBIT, and STN. Chinese information professionals, certainly those at ISTIC, are as up-to-date in online retrieval of information as their North American counterparts, and may be further along in some areas of networking. The retrieval service has established twelve work stations in other cities at which researchers and/or search specialists may carry out online searches through ISTIC. These terminals are at province and county sites, some of which have their own sci-tech collections, while others are only information service centers. A number of sites are designed for research in specific industries, such as the garment industry. To further support manufacturing in China, ISTIC also maintains a trade and product collection, which includes models or photos of products and the accompanying printed brochure, catalogs, etc.

No traveler goes to Beijing without making the almost mandatory pilgrimage to the Palace Museum, commonly known as the Forbidden

City. It was again a rainy day and our national guide, Dali Zha, commented upon our luck, since the rain had kept the crowds small. I don't believe that perception was shared by many delegates, but we soon came to realize that we were visiting Beijing's cultural treasures with a large number of Chinese visitors from other provinces. They often travel many days to Beijing to visit the Forbidden City and the Ming tombs and to climb the restored and accessible portions of the Great Wall. Their overseas relatives are likewise intrigued by the treasures of their common forebears. In the hotels, Friendship Stores, and historical sites, the flat accent of North American English spoken by Chinese-Americans was commonly heard.

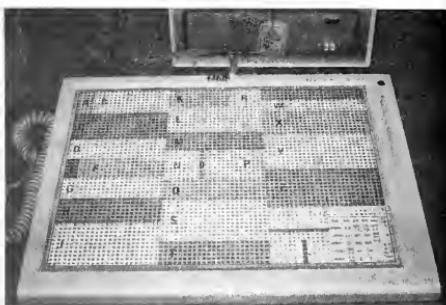


Tai He Dian (Hall of Supreme Harmony), the main ceremonial hall of the Forbidden City, from Tai He Men (Gatehouse of Supreme Harmony).

#### August 17-20, Nanjing

Nanjing, site of the Sun Yatsen mausoleum, is a city of considerable historical importance. Sun was a major figure in the Chinese republican revolution of 1911 and was founder of the Kuomintang, the Chinese Nationalist Party. It was in Nanjing that Sun formed a republican government four months before the abdication of Pu-Yi, the last emperor of China. Nanjing is also the site of Nanjing University, founded in 1902, during the Qing (Ching) Dynasty. Nanjing University is the first Chinese university to undertake a joint project with an American university, the Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore. Together they established the Center for Chinese and American Studies, which accepted its first students in Nanjing in 1986.

The automation of bibliographic records in Chinese is in evidence at the Nanjing University library. The staff is creating a circulation database consisting of brief records (usually author,



Chinese ideograph keyboard for automated database at Nanjing University.

title, and imprint) for 100,000 titles most frequently used by the undergraduates enrolled at the university. The total collection is in excess of 2,800,000 volumes, 600,000 of which are in foreign languages.

In Nanjing the delegation also visited Southeast University (formerly Nanjing Institute of Technology), the Nanjing Institute of Geology and Paleontology, and the Jiangsu Scientific Information Institution. Southeast University too is developing an automated circulation system; the database contains 20,000 titles and has searchable access points by author, title, and key word in Chinese and in English.

#### August 21-23, Shanghai

This city of 13 million is so vast and densely populated that it is governed as a province. It is also the most Western in appearance because of the architecture remaining in the former concessions controlled by countries like France and Great Britain. Fudan ("new day rising") University was the primary site visit for the delegation in Shanghai. Because of its rapid building program, Fudan University has the appearance in many ways of a modern North American campus, although it was founded in 1905. The student body numbers 11,000, including about 400 students from Japan, Great Britain, and the United States; the faculty is composed of 5,000 teachers and researchers.

Fudan University has two central libraries—one devoted to the humanities and social sciences and another for the natural and technological sciences. Its collection includes 8,000 volumes in French that were acquired before liberation and a large number of journals in mathematics and science, some dating back to the nineteenth century.

Professor Zhilan Mai, who served as interpreter for the visiting delegates and the Fudan hosts, accompanied the group to the humanities/social sciences library. It is in this library that provenance of materials is a determinant in location: Hong Kong and Taiwan publications are in a separate collection with its own card catalog, although access to this collection is not restricted. As in many other Chinese academic libraries, foreign- and Chinese-language publications are housed separately.

#### August 24-27, Kunming

In Kunming, the capital of Yunnan province, the local librarians gathered at the Provincial Library for the professional exchange with the Research Libraries Delegation, the first of its kind to visit the province. Representatives from the region included the secretary-general of the Yunnan Society of Library Science and presidents of the Yunnan Agricultural University Library, the Yunnan University Library, Kunming Engineering College Library, and Yunnan Normal University Library.

A major issue in Chinese libraries is automation, and many questions on that subject were entertained during the question-and-answer sessions. Because no shared bibliographic utilities like OCLC, RLIN, and Western Library Network exist in China, those libraries in Yunnan that want to automate must build their databases locally. No electronic access to the bibliographic records of other institutes' collections in the country is now possible, so labor-intensive keyboard entry for each title is required.

Yunnan province, which lies in south-central China, borders on Tibet, Burma, and Laos, and this geography is responsible for its large population of what are called "the Minorities," or non-Han Chinese. The Yunnan Provincial Library includes a large collection of materials, some in



Members of a Sanyi performing group dressed in native costume, Yunnan province.

the languages of the Minorities that have written alphabets, on these ethnic groups.

Geography is probably also the prime factor in the eagerness with which Yunnan host librarians participated in the professional visit. One of the U.S. delegates jokingly described the interest of Chinese librarians in the exchange of ideas and information as directly related to the distance from China's eastern seaboard, Yunnan being farthest west. It is likely true that Beijing and Shanghai entertain the most visitors in all professions, but at each library visit there were individuals who displayed the intellectual curiosity about information resources that was in evidence in Kunming.

While in Hong Kong at the end of the trip, each delegate was asked to compose a brief statement of his or her impressions of China's libraries, librarians, and culture. These responses were added to the daily log, whose maintenance during the trip was assigned to a different delegate each day. A review of the written reactions makes it clear that some of us were struck by the pressing need for physical preservation of the collections; others could not understand the widespread duplication of effort, even in the same province, with no apparent plan or program to standardize; still others commented on the juxtaposition of the very primitive and the very technically advanced. I think that if we consider our impressions, memories, and incredulity over the next few months, what we will come to recognize is that we have described the contrasts and incongruities of a rapidly developing country. Exchanges such as the one we participated in are as valuable to the visitors as they are to the hosts—not the least in pointing out how fortunate North America is in the development of information resources.



Centuries-old teahouse in Shanghai.

## A CONVERSATION WITH JENNIFER CARGILL

by Cory Masiak

In the administrative hierarchy of Fondren Library, the position of associate university librarian is of signal importance, for the heads of all library divisions report to the university librarian through the individual who holds that office. Jennifer Cargill assumed the responsibilities of second-in-command at Fondren on August 8, 1988, and in mid-October she moved into a newly renovated office on the second floor of the library, where we discussed a number of topics.

Cargill comes to Rice from Texas Tech University Libraries in Lubbock. She worked there for four years, initially as associate director for technical processing and then, following a merger and reorganization of the library system, as associate director of libraries. The latter position was similar to her current one, though she has somewhat more responsibility at Fondren, she says. Here, unlike at Texas Tech, all departments report to her.

Cargill, a diminutive, short-haired brunette from the small town of Ruston in northern Louisiana, earned a master's degree in library science from Louisiana State University in 1967. Following graduation, she accepted a position in the acquisitions department of M.D. Anderson Memorial Library at the University of Houston, and later moved to the public services division and the operation of branch libraries. In the early seventies she relocated to Miami of Ohio University in Oxford, Ohio, working first as a science librarian and then as head of acquisitions.

It was a period of technological ferment in library circles, particularly in Ohio, where the database system OCLC (an acronym then for Ohio College Library Center) was getting under way, and Miami was one of its founding institutions. Says Cargill, "Librarians in Ohio were very involved in the development of OCLC policies and procedures, so those were interesting years." At Miami she obtained a second master's degree, in higher education. She returned to Texas in 1984 with the job offer in Lubbock.

Jennifer Cargill brings to Fondren a broad range of library experience, and the university as well as the library stands to benefit from her expertise and her dedication to high standards. When asked what she found appealing in the position here, Cargill was quick to respond:



*Jennifer Cargill*

"Rice doesn't have some of the financial problems that state-funded universities now have." In addition, having come from a public-institution background, she thought the switch to a private university would be stimulating. Size was also an advantage: Rice is "a much smaller university with a very high quality of student body" and a low student/teacher ratio. And finally, Fondren's collection has a good reputation. Though not uniformly excellent, she says it has particular strengths, and its size is comparable to those of many larger institutions.

Up until now, Cargill has largely found herself assessing the situation at Fondren. "I've been spending my time becoming familiar with the activities within this particular library," she reported, "beginning to identify some of the issues, learning about the strengths of the staff. I'll continue to do that, of course, but then I'll also be looking ahead at the direction in which Rice is moving as a university, what the library's role will be, and how the library will need to change its services or staffing levels to fit in with the way that the university develops. Admittedly, some of that's been slowed down because we've been spending a lot of time just with the problems that arise as a result of renovation."

When asked if she would like to see any major changes, Cargill replied, "I think we need to get past the renovation project and get settled down

before we start moving into any major changes. People have been living with this renovation for quite a while.... But there are a number of areas where I see that we'll need to make some changes."

Cargill believes that the library has become a priority of the university, and this augurs well for Fondren's future. Whereas a lot of university libraries do not receive adequate funding for collection development, this has not been the case at Fondren. "We have been supported in monies for the collection," she said. "That's very important right now, because the price of periodicals has skyrocketed.... We have not had to face the large number of cancellations that other universities have had to face. Rice has been fortunate in that the administration has provided support, and we hope that will continue."

In spite of the renovation, Cargill feels still more attention must be given to the physical facility. "We need to start planning for additional space," she asserted. "It could be a combination of additional space in this building or additional space elsewhere on campus, but we are approaching a space problem. We will need additional stack space and study areas for library patrons."

When asked what this means in terms of collection development, Cargill responded, "I would hope that our collection will continue to grow at even higher levels than it is now, but we also will be looking at the types of things we collect. We're moving away from collecting just the traditional books, periodicals, and microforms. There will be more materials available electronically on CD-ROM [Compact Disk—Read-Only Memory], and we'll be investigating access to databases through the online catalog.... We will be identifying what we want to acquire in these new formats, and that will be an ongoing concern as more and more become available."

Cargill's many responsibilities are not limited to the administrative. Besides her career as a librarian, she is a prolific writer on library topics and has an extensive list of publications to her credit. She is currently at work on a revised edition of an earlier book, which will be her sixth. She is also talking to a number of publishers about potential book contracts, and, on top of that, "I usually have some articles or presentations I'm working on," she said. Cargill has served as the editor of two national periodicals, and recently she edited a collection of articles for

which she chose the contributors. Summing up all this activity, she remarked with a wry smile, "I have a tendency to make too many commitments."

Cargill fears that her productivity may be somewhat checked in Houston—as compared to Lubbock, where she wrote and saw through publication three books, or, for that matter, as compared to Oxford, with a population of under 10,000—due to the far greater number of distractions and diversions in this metropolis. "To relax in Lubbock," she explained, "you go to the mall. And I'm not a compulsive shopper."

All of Cargill's books have been collaborative undertakings, a process, she said, that can be both frustrating and rewarding. In her experience with it, each author is initially responsible for drafting certain parts of the book, but then each reviews and if necessary rewrites the other's work. So there is total involvement with the entire text. What is disconcerting, says Cargill, is if one partner "drops the ball"; hence a prerequisite is knowing a collaborator's strengths and weaknesses. Overall, however, Cargill has found the collaborative process a comfortable one "because one of you will be able to frame something better or more effectively than the other person." In addition, there is "a built-in support system" plus a motivator: "If you come in on Monday and see your collaborator, and you haven't done your share that weekend, there's real guilt!"

Cargill's collaborations have on occasion extended into the realm of fiction. While at Miami of Ohio, she and a friend wrote "a trashy murder mystery as an escape from writing professional literature." The manuscript was accepted for publication, and only the last-minute failure of the publisher prevented readers from seeing the work on supermarket shelves. Cargill confesses that "it would be interesting to try fiction again." In her spare time perhaps. 

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#### RICE QUARTZ WATCHES

The Friends of Fondren is selling quartz watches with the graphic owl and the word "RICE" underneath the owl. The watches have a genuine leather strap. Deluxe watches are selling for \$59.95, regular watches for \$49.95. For more information, call Mary Lou Margrave at 621-1266 or the Friends office at 527-4022.

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## FONDREN LIBRARY RENOVATION DEDICATION

A notable occasion in an event-filled homecoming weekend was the dedication of the recent Fondren Library renovation, which took place at 4:00 p.m. on Friday, November 11. The theme chosen for Rice Homecoming 1988, "A Tribute to Fondren Library," could not have been more appropriate. The stateliness and elegance of the remodeled structure elicited expressions of admiration and praise from students, faculty, staff, and visitors alike. For those who had lived through the eighteen months of construction, the sense of relief and appreciation was especially heartfelt. For those who had not yet seen the changes, the transformation was almost awe-inspiring. A blond interior has given way to deep, rich mahogany; the new color scheme of the carpeting and walls reflects hues visible through the windows of the library—blue sky, green grass, pink stone and burnt-orange tile of buildings on campus.

A standing-room-only crowd gathered in the new rotunda for the dedication ceremonies, presided over by Josephine E. Abercrombie, chairman of the Building and Grounds Committee and vice-chairman of the Board of Governors of Rice University. In her opening remarks, Mrs. Abercrombie explained that the \$3.7-billion renovation of Fondren Library began in 1986 with the conversion from a card catalog system to an online catalog and has now concluded with the remodeling of the physical structure—moving, as it were, from the internal functioning of the facility to its external appearance. Three representatives of the architectural firm Ray Bailey Architects, Inc., and the contractor H.A. Lott, Inc., were present for the occasion, and all were proudly introduced as Rice graduates. Mrs. Abercrombie went on to thank the benefactors, as well as the Kresge Foundation for its generous challenge grant and the Friends of Fondren for having raised close to \$200,000, a sum that surpassed the challenge.

Rice University President George Rupp in his statement thanked individual donors for their gifts: the Fondren family, the Cullen Trust for Higher Education (Cullen Rotunda), James and Dee Elder (Elder Periodical Room), David and Eula Wintermann (Wintermann Reserve Reading Room), and John H. Wright (Wright Reference Room), who traveled the farthest to attend the dedication ceremony. President Rupp praised the renovated library as a "more welcoming"

place that will be of importance not only to the campus but to the city as a whole. It is "now worthy," he said, in appearance and in functioning.

Samuel M. Carrington, Jr., university librarian, gave a brief history of Fondren Library in his remarks. For the first thirty-seven years of its existence, the library collection was scattered across campus, Dr. Carrington said, and it was not until 1949 with the dedication of the library building, whose construction was made possible through the generosity of Mrs. Ella F. Fondren and her children, that the collection had a home. Outfitted with cork flooring to dampen noise, a dumbwaiter to transport books, and a paging board, Fondren Library was a model for academic libraries across the country. Today, fully equipped with electronic technology and an attractive new interior, Fondren is once again, said Dr. Carrington, "a model worthy of imitation."



*Josephine Abercrombie addressing crowd at the dedication of the Fondren Library renovation.*

Student Association President Andy Karsner and Graduate Student Association President Susan Hult were present on behalf of the student body. Both were grateful for the improved study environment of their "second home," and Ms. Hult expressed her conviction that the new facility would help attract qualified graduate students from around the country to Rice.

J.D. "Bucky" Allhouse, president of the Association of Rice Alumni, and Edgar O. Lovett II, president of the Friends of Fondren, expressed their pride in the magnificent setting, which, said Lovett, "caters to enduring aspirations." Closing remarks were made by Mrs. Abercrombie, and the crowd adjourned to the Martha W. and H. Malcolm Lovett Lounge for a reception.

## FRIENDS OF FONDREN AWARDS CEREMONY

The Friends of Fondren and Rice Engineering Alumni Members annual brunch and awards ceremony was held Saturday, November 12, from 9:00 to 10:00 a.m., in the Alice Pratt Brown Library of Fondren Library. Recipients of the 1988 Friends of Fondren Library Award were John T. and Betty Cabaniss, who were honored for distinguished service and contributions to Fondren Library and Rice University. Twelve books (listed below) in the fields of architecture and history have been donated to Fondren Library in the Cabanisses' name, and their name has been added to a permanent plaque in the Sarah Lane Lounge bearing the names of past honorees.

In his introduction to Mr. and Mrs. Cabaniss, Edgar O. Lovett II, president of the Friends board of directors, gave the following history of their involvement with Rice University. While an undergraduate at Rice, John actively participated in student affairs. He was a member of the Hanszen College cabinet, was a senior adviser, and received the Hanszen College Service Award at commencement. He was also president and treasurer of the Rally Club, participated in intramural sports, and, in his junior year, won the Farb, Miller & Beerman Scholarship in Accounting. He was on the Dean's List and, after graduating in 1963 with a B.A. in business administration, went on to law school at the University of Texas. Upon completion of his law degree, John was chosen for the coveted position of law clerk to Chief Judge John R. Brown of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit, which he held for a year. In 1967 he joined the law firm of Andrews & Kurth in Houston, where he has been a partner since 1975.

The Cabanisses have been strong champions of Fondren Library, said Lovett. John has been an active participant on the Friends board in many capacities, including serving as treasurer from 1978 to 1981 and as president from 1983 to 1984. Betty served as a board member from 1985 to 1986. Both have worked diligently on the Fondren Saturday Night benefit, which raises money for the Friends' Endowment Fund. Lovett concluded by saying that the Cabanisses' involvement has been distinguished by dedication and genuine enthusiasm for the Friends' programs.



Gina Walters

Betty and John Cabaniss, recipients of the 1988 Friends of Fondren Library Award.

### HONOR BOOKS

- The Byzantine Revival, 780-842,*  
by Warren Treadgold  
*Charleston: Antebellum Architecture and Civic Destiny,*  
by Kenneth Severens  
*Colonial Design in the New World,*  
by David Larkin, June Sprigg,  
and James Johnson  
*Contemporary History: Practice and Method,*  
edited by Anthony Seldon  
*Cultural History, Between Practices and Representations,*  
by Roger Chartier  
*The French Revolution and Enlightenment in England, 1789-1832,*  
by Seamus Deane  
*Highbrow/Lowbrow: The Emergence of Cultural Hierarchy in America,*  
by Lawrence W. Levine  
*The History of Postmodern Architecture,*  
by Heinrich Klotz  
*The Invention of George Washington,*  
by Paul K. Longmore  
*The Last Lion, Winston Spencer Churchill: Alone, 1932-1940,*  
by William Manchester  
*Rothschild, A Story of Wealth and Power,*  
by Derek Wilson  
*Washington's Audacious State Capitol and Its Builders,*  
by Norman J. Johnston

## THANK YOU, JOE!

by George Williams

Fondren Library has one of the most extensive collections of ornithological literature in Texas. And now, through a curiously indirect route, the collection is being considerably augmented. The late Joseph M. Heiser, Jr., who died February 25, 1987, at age 89, is responsible.

Joe Heiser, as everyone called him, was an environmentalist and conservationist even before those words appeared in any dictionary. That was almost seventy years ago, at a time when a booming Texas was frantically engaged in exploiting the environment, not conserving it. From almost the day he returned from two years in France with the American Expeditionary Force in World War I, Joe became one of the most active environmentalists-conservationists in the history of the state, and possibly the greatest of them.

Early in the 1920s he started a nationwide letter-writing drive to save the American Holly tree, which was then being cut and gathered commercially in enormous quantities for Christmas decorations, and was already becoming an "endangered species" when that term was unknown. As a result of the movement Joe started, laws were passed to protect the holly, and it has made a good comeback. Whenever I see one of these tall trees in the forest, a little voice within me murmurs, "Thank you, Joe!"

The next project that Joe undertook, in 1923, was to organize the Houston Outdoor Nature Club, the first environmental organization in Texas and the model and mother club for many others that were formed later throughout the state. The Houston club still survives, with hundreds of members.

Very shrewdly, just to attract public attention to the native birds of Texas, Joe started a movement to have Texas adopt an official state bird, and engineered a contest among Texans to choose that bird. Joe's way was (as he told me) to start an agitation for some conservationist cause, get a large organization or well-known public figures interested, and then let them push the cause, with himself supplying zeal and information from behind the scenes. "They like to get

## TEXACO TOPICS

NUMBER THREE - 1966



*Joe Heiser strolling through the Little Thicket Sanctuary, as pictured on the cover of Texaco Topics in 1966.*

the credit," he said with good-natured cynicism, "and I like to get results." The outcome in this case was the designation of the Mockingbird as the State Bird of Texas and, more important, a growing awareness on the part of Texans of native bird life.

Early in this century, feather hunters supplying feathers for women's hats had exterminated the Roseate Spoonbill, a large and sensationally beautiful wading bird, from the entire Texas coast. In the late 1920s, however, Joe discovered six of the birds breeding on remote little Vingt-et-une (pronounced "van-toon") Island on the far side of Galveston Bay. Immediately he pulled strings and managed to get the island made into a bird sanctuary. Under protection (and with the additional protection of recently enacted federal laws) the Vingt-et-une spoonbills thrived, and their descendants spread out to colonize the entire Galveston Bay area and the upper Texas coast. Today this stunning bird is commonly found in the area. Whenever I see one, a small voice inside me says, "Thank you, Joe!"

Meanwhile, Joe had helped organize the Texas Federation of Nature Clubs, the first statewide coalition of such groups, whose objectives

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*George Williams is Professor Emeritus of English at Rice University. Among his books is one on the evolution of bird migration.*

included "establishment of state or national parks in the Big Bend, the Rio Grande Valley, and the Big Thicket," as well as "reasonable, practical control of oil exploration in rivers, bays, and gulf waters to prevent destruction or damage to wildlife." Whenever I enter one of those parks today, or read about antipollution regulations for oil drilling, a voice within me says, "Thank you, Joe!"

As one of the founders and original governors of the now powerful national Nature Conservancy, Joe received the conservancy's highest award in 1985 for his contribution to saving "more than two million acres of America's most unique and significant lands" from commercial exploitation. For this work many thousands of Americans living and unborn can say, "Thank you, Joe!"

For forty years Joe was an accountant and auditor for the Texas Company in Houston. This job would never have made him rich. But during his lunch hour downtown he would go regularly to a broker's office and play the stock market. He regarded this as an amusing avocation, like playing the slot machines in Las Vegas, and he often laughed at himself for his weakness. Nevertheless, he was not kidding himself: shrewd mind that he was, he made a fortune from his "gambbling." Moreover, his family, having lived in

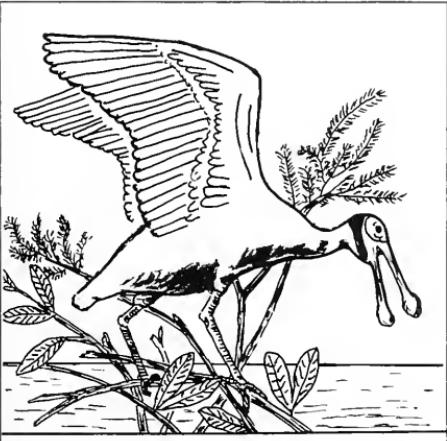
Houston from before the beginning of the century, had acquired a good deal of Houston land at cheap prices—and sold it in the 1960s and 1970s for fabulous sums. Yet Joe never left his job at Texaco, or bought a fancy new car, or moved from the quiet house on Kipling Street where he had lived for fifty years.

In 1950 he bought with his own money 450 acres of a wild forested area in the San Jacinto River bottom, near Evergreen, to establish a wilderness sanctuary where typical East Texas nature forms could be preserved in their primal state. Later on, he added more acreage, until the area consisted of 630 acres. He named the place the Little Thicket, and it is still called that.

He sold the sanctuary to the Outdoor Nature Club for the same price he paid for it. (He told me that the club would cherish the place more if it had to collect funds to buy it.) But he set up an endowment fund that would pay for county assessments, insurance, maintenance of fences and facilities, etc. Today, the essentially wilderness character of the Little Thicket Nature Sanctuary attracts botanists, ornithologists, biologists, herpetologists, entomologists, nature-study and biology classes from schools and colleges, and "just plain nature lovers." The hundreds who visit the place every year must assuredly say, in each of their hearts, "Thank you, Joe!"

Joe knew more about nature than any other person I have ever met. He could name, and give some interesting information about, the most insignificant little wild plant; he could recognize dozens of bird species by their songs and call notes alone, heard far away through thick forest; he knew all the reptiles and amphibians of this region; and he knew their habits and their living relationships to one another.

I first met Joe in 1932. His was the only name from Houston that I could find in the membership roster of the American Ornithologists' Union. So I called him up, found him cordial and enthusiastic, and went to see him. Soon afterward, he and I (along with, as a rule, some friend of his or mine) were making regular field trips to find out about bird life along the Texas coast, all the way from Rockport to High Island, and inland on the coastal plain. This went on for twenty years. We were the first consistent observers and record keepers in this extraordinarily rich ornithological area. As a result of our observations, most of what had been written previously about birds of the area had to be rewritten.



A gift to FONDREN LIBRARY from  
the JOSEPH M. HEISER, JR. Fund

Bookplate that will appear in books given in Joe Heiser's name.  
The drawing shows a Roseate Spoonbill, a species that Joe was instrumental in saving along the upper Texas coast.

Joe was a better field man than I. Not only did he have an acute ear to recognize bird sounds, but he himself could imitate these sounds. I have heard him call birds out of the woods and to within a few feet of him, and once I saw a bird that he had called alight on his outstretched hand. And it was not birds only. I have seen him stand on the edge of a small lake in the Little Thicket and call catfish out of the water. They would push themselves clear up on the sand at his feet and gobble bread from his hand.

He never attended college (relatively few Americans did so in his youth), but he was one of the best-educated men I have ever known. He could talk with authority and discernment not only about nature but also about history, economics, politics, and science. A visit with few college professors could have been more rewarding than an hour's talk with Joe.

He was not a solemn, serious man—quite the contrary. He had a rollicking sense of humor, liked to make wisecracks (often with himself as the target), and dearly loved to tell corny jokes. When he came to my home for a visit, he would never knock or ring the bell, but would stand at the door and shout at the top of his voice, "Anybody home?" He had many old-fashioned expressions he liked to use, such as always referring,

with kindly euphemism, to mentally retarded people as "afflicted," and often exclaiming when he encountered a big truck on the highway, "I don't want to try conclusions with that thing!"

In a beautifully worded paragraph of his last will and testament, he leaves "To my longtime friend and kindred spirit George G. Williams, the sum of One Thousand Dollars (\$1,000.00) cash, in remembrance of satisfying days afield and productive shared interests in nature, both human and wild, and shared civic concerns, sympathetic philosophies, and a lively and stimulating sense of humor."

I think Joe would be most pleased if he could know (and perhaps he does know) that I am accepting that One Thousand Dollars and using it to buy nature books for Fondren Library. In each will be a bookplate identifying the book as a gift from Joe. The books will doubtless be available here for centuries to those who still share Joe's concern for wild nature. I like to think of all those people in the future who will consult these books, will notice the bookplate, and will whisper to themselves, "Thank you, Joe!"

*The author wishes to thank Ralph C. Byle for furnishing the photograph of Joe that accompanies this article and for supplying sources of information about Joe.*

# CALENDAR

1988 - 1989

**Sunday, February 5** SCHUBERTIAD A nineteenth-century musical event featuring performances by students of the Shepherd School of Music. Farnsworth Pavilion, Ley Student Center, 3:00 p.m.

**Saturday, March 18** FONDREN SATURDAY NIGHT IX Party and auction to benefit Fondren Library. RMC, 7:00 p.m.

**Tuesday, April 25** PREVIEW OF STUDENT ART EXHIBITION sponsored by the Friends and the Arts Committee of the Association of Alumni. Sewall Gallery, Rice University, 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.

**Wednesday, May 10** CHILDREN'S BOOKS Mary Ellyn Voden, Director of Education, Children's Museum. Annual Meeting. Farnsworth Pavilion, Ley Student Center, 7:30 p.m.

## BLACKWELL'S, THE COMPLEAT BOOKSELLER

by Cory Masiak

As reported by Ernest and Betty Charles

A tale—quite possibly apocryphal—circulates concerning the original Blackwell's bookshop, founded in 1879 to serve the academic community of Oxford, England. Within a year of opening, the story goes, business was so successful that Benjamin Henry Blackwell hired an apprentice to help him keep stock. However, the shop was so filled with books and so tiny—only twelve feet square—that it could not accommodate more than two persons at any time, thus forcing the apprentice to step into the street whenever a customer entered. Fiction or no, the anecdote points up several things about Blackwell's that still hold true more than a century later: it carries on a brisk trade in books, and it strives to satisfy customers.

Today Blackwell's serves the international academic community as a distributor and supplier of British and European books and journals. Fondren Library is one of approximately 15,000 academic and research libraries worldwide that avail themselves of at least a portion of its comprehensive range of services. Blackwell's associate company, Blackwell North America (BNA), with headquarters in Blackwood, New Jersey, offers a similar set of services for American and Canadian imprints.

This past summer, Betty Charles, director of the Friends of Fondren Library, and her husband, Ernest, paid a visit to Blackwell's in Oxford, where they spoke with marketing manager Chris Tyzack. Tyzack described Blackwell's role as intermediary more fully: "Think of us as a middleman between the publisher and the user. Libraries don't deal directly with each publisher—all the administrative and accounting problems, the different procedures. The middleman acts as a funnel. Every library has different requirements, and every publisher has different requirements. We take all these extraordinary library requirements and filter them into a form that publishers can understand, and we take all the publisher responses and translate them into a form that the library can understand."

All told, Fondren Library uses seven major book distributors, or vendors, to varying degrees, with a sizable portion of its business going to Blackwell's and BNA. In addition, the library

deals with hundreds of publishers independently or middlemen, in spite of the increased administrative complexity that such variety entails, because, for whatever reason, some presses simply refuse to work through distributors. A brief explanation of the various methods of ordering books may help to clarify vendor operations and library acquisitions. A library may establish an approval plan with a vendor, an arrangement by which all books in a particular subject area are automatically sent by the vendor to the library upon publication. Final acceptance of the books is contingent on the library's approval. A British book approval plan has been set up between Fondren Library and Blackwell's, so that all British



The original Blackwell's bookshop, Broad Street, Oxford.

books purchased on approval come through the Oxford distributor. A firm order, by contrast, is the request for specific, individual titles—as one would order single items from a catalog. Fondren has both firm-order and approval accounts with Blackwell North America.

Blackwell's has on file as sources of supply about 88,000 publisher addresses (some of which may be multiple addressees), ranging from the corporate giant to the small, esoteric press. Each of these publishers works in a different way. Tyzack believes that one of the pleasures of his business is the fact that many publishing firms are run by "book people," individuals who simply love to produce books and for whom the logistics of distribution and finance are secondary. But while he concedes this may be delightful to the bibliophilic publisher, "it's a nightmare when you're trying to get books from them."

Blackwell's conducts business in 88 currencies in approximately 120 countries, including Mongolia, where it has one library customer. Materials it handles encompass the "straightforward academic monograph" as well as the "obscure twenty-five-pence pamphlet" or the rare handprinted book of poetry produced in a garage. Large as it is, Blackwell's remains a private, family-owned business, with the fourth generation of Blackwells now actively involved in the management of the company. Unlike their great-grandfather, however, members of the family no longer reside above the original shop at 50 Broad Street—a once venerable English tradition—for the space has long since been converted to office use.

In England alone there are about 400,000 books in print, says Tyzack, all in a constant state of flux—going in and out of print, being reprinted, their prices changing. As he explained, a good deal of activity is required simply to maintain current information on all the titles. Blackwell's bookshop on Broad Street, also in effect its warehouse, has a stock of more than 200,000 titles, most in multiple copies. It serves the walk-in patron as well as the library customer half a world away. A room in the shop at one time bore the distinction of being the single largest book salesroom anywhere in the world, with nearly four and a half miles of shelving. (That record has since been surpassed.) Seeking a comparison for the volume and variety of Blackwell's stock, Tyzack finally drew an analogy to the automobile spare-parts business with its tremendous inventory of minute hardware—screws, bolts, nuts, washers. Curiously, Blackwell's stock control is one of the few operations that is not yet computerized. Systems now available, reports Tyzack, would require too much time at the checkout for customers buying large quantities of books, so the company is waiting for the development of a bar-code system for books, a much quicker means of processing sales.

Blackwell's likewise ranks as one of the largest suppliers of journals worldwide, although this operation is essentially a clerical one, maintains Tyzack. Transactions are carried out entirely on computer without any handling of materials on the premises; journal publishers themselves are responsible for shipping the journals.

Though it specializes in the supply of current books and journals, Blackwell's also has a rare-books department, appropriately housed in a fourteenth-century manor in the village of Fyfield, eight miles outside of Oxford. Tyzack



Fyfield Manor, the home of Blackwell's Rare Books.

admitted that Blackwell's does not like to sell an antiquarian item to libraries for the simple reason that dealers "never, ever see it again." By contrast, the sale of a rare book to an individual generally means that in seven years' time on average the item will be back in the marketplace. The owner may need the money, become interested in another subject, or grow bored with the book, theorizes Tyzack, so it is more likely to remain in circulation if in private hands.

According to Tyzack, the book-supply business has grown more competitive over the past few years, as library acquisition budgets have remained stable or shrunk and as book and journal costs have risen. In North America alone, he says, there are ten to twelve large or medium-size suppliers and many small, local suppliers. The latter, because they tend to be more flexible and personal, are often able to provide services the big companies cannot offer, and the result is to fragment further a diminishing pie.

Academic libraries in the United States, far more numerous than in Britain because of the greater number of universities, constitute a major segment of Blackwell's business. Tyzack estimates that the total book budget of academic libraries in the United Kingdom is less than that of the University of California system alone. But while British academic business comprises a mere fraction of Blackwell's overall trade, Oxford University remains its single largest customer.

Tyzack admits that due to "the inexorable law of economics," individual business is no longer as significant a part of Blackwell's activity as it once was. Individual accounts are simply more expensive to service, and the supplier is often likely to lose money on a transaction. "It's curious," says Tyzack. "People will ask their bookseller to do things that they would never ask of any other

shop they go into. With the bookseller, it's not supposed to be a commercial relationship."

In spite of its large size, Blackwell's prides itself on the personal service it provides customers. There was some concern that when automation was introduced the personal touch would be lost. To prevent this, Blackwell's organized its employees into small, specialized teams, each team being responsible for customers in a particular part of the world. Explains Tyzack, "All the American libraries are looked after by the same small team of people who only look after American libraries. The Australian libraries are looked after by another group, and so on." This may not be the most cost-effective method of running the business, he admits, but it allows team members to become familiar with the peculiarities and idiosyncrasies of the libraries they are responsible for. In addition, he says, it builds commitment and a sense of identification on the part of the staff, for employees consider certain libraries "their customers."



Processing book orders at Blackwell's.

Rather than spend heavily on advertising and promotional materials, Blackwell's prefers to send customer-service representatives into the libraries to talk to librarians, again emphasizing personal interaction. Tyzack himself was shortly to leave for Australia, and he would be accompanied by the supervisor of the Australian orders section. "It costs money," he says, "but we think it's a really worthwhile investment, because it builds up trust in the relationship—a critical part of the business."

Another reason that Tyzack considers the effort to personalize services a reasonable marketing strategy is because it means "you can hold your customers in the bad times as well as in the good times." "And if you make a mistake," he continues, "which we will, there's more tolerance and understanding." The company's biggest blunder, still referred to as "the great catastrophe," occurred about six years ago. A vast consignment of books intended for South Australia was instead shipped to South Africa because an employee misread "S.A." Large-scale mistakes of this nature are rare at Blackwell's. The error rate, says Tyzack, is approximately .2 percent, while that of the publishers it deals with can run as high as three to four percent.

After nearly two decades with Blackwell's, Tyzack summed up his own feelings about the book trade this way: "It's got a lot of complexity, a lot of fascination about it. It's much more fun than working with baked beans, shoes, or something like that." Benjamin Henry Blackwell would no doubt have echoed that sentiment. ■



The Solar in Fyfield Manor, with its juxtaposition of the fourteenth and twentieth centuries.

Photographs by Betty Charles.

THE FRIENDS OF FONDREN ANNUAL BRUNCH AND  
AWARDS CEREMONY  
November 12, 1988



Photographs by Gina Walters.

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September 1, 1988—  
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*The Friends of Fondren Library is most grateful to these new Friends for their interest and to the Friends of longer standing for their support and for renewing their commitments.*

## GIFTS TO FONDREN LIBRARY

September 1, 1988—  
November 30, 1988

The Friends sponsors a gifts and memorials program for Fondren Library that provides its members and the community at large with a way to remember or honor friends and relatives. It also provides Fondren the means to acquire books and collections beyond the reach of its regular budget. All gifts to Fondren through the Friends' gift program complement the library's university subsidy.

Funds donated through the Friends are acknowledged by the library to the donor and to whomever the donor indicates. Gifts can be designated in honor or memory of someone or on the occasion of some signal event such as birthdays, graduation, or promotion. Bookplates are placed in volumes before they become part of the library's permanent collection.

For more information about the Friends' gift program, you may call Gifts and Memorials or the Friends' office (527-4022). Gifts may be sent to Friends of Fondren, Rice University, P.O. Box 1892, Houston, Texas 77251; they qualify as charitable donations.

The Friends and Fondren Library gratefully acknowledge the following gifts, donations to the Friends' fund, and donations of periodicals and other materials to Fondren. All gifts enhance the quality of the library's collections and enable Fondren Library to serve more fully an ever-expanding university and Houston community.

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*Gifts of books, journals, manuscripts, recordings, and videotapes were received from:*

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